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ABSTRACT

An examination of the effects of the Adult Education Act (AEA) 25 years after its passage reveals the growth of the adult basic education (ABE) enterprise in the United States. The AEA provides funding to states to develop and maintain adult basic education programming. Because ABE was recognized as a means of improving the economic status of the poor and unemployed, the Adult Basic Education program was passed as part of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. In 1966, ABE was transferred to the U.S. Office of Education (USOE). The 1970s saw the creation of the National Advisory Council on Adult Education, limitations in federal discretionary funding, and emphasis on functional literacy. The rising concern for literacy in the 1980s became a national priority in the 1984 amendments. Discretionary funds for research and development, dissemination, and demonstration projects again became available. The 1988 reauthorization substantially increased federal funds and included grants for workplace and English-as-a-Second Language literacy. The National Literacy Act of 1991 continued the focus on literacy as a means of solving many social problems. AEA has been successful in contributing to the growth of the field and the training of professionals. Implementation of the AEA in its various incarnations shows that more public debate about the policy issues involved is needed. (SK)

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Information Series No. 346

ENDS OR MEANS: AN OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF THE ADULT EDUCATION ACT

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

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FOREWORD

The Educational Resources Information Center Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education (ERIC/ACVE) is 1 of 16 clearinghouses in a national information system that is funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education. This publication was developed to fulfill one of the functions of the clearinghouse--interpreting the literature in the ERIC database.

This paper is one of two commissioned by ERIC/ACVE to celebrate the joint 25th anniversary celebrations of the ERIC system and the Adult Education Act (AEA). The other, ***The Adult Education Act: A Guide to the Literature and Funded Projects*** by Meredyth A. Leahy, reviews the outcomes of the special projects funded by the AEA. Together, the two papers provide an important retrospective of the legislation and its results.

ERIC/ACVE would like to thank Amy D. Rose for her work in the preparation of this paper. Dr. Rose is Assistant Professor, Department of Leadership Education and Policy Studies, Northern Illinois University. Her doctoral dissertation was titled "Toward the Origins of Knowledge: Adult Education in the 1920s," and subsequently she has published numerous articles and given presentations on such topics as the founding of the American Association for Adult Education, accreditation of armed services training by U.S. colleges post-World War II, the history of literacy education for adults, and trends in the history of adult education. Dr. Rose is also co-editor of ***Historical Foundations of Adult Education***.

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Ray D. Ryan
Executive Director
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An examination of the effects of the Adult Education Act (AEA) 25 years after its passage reveals the growth of the adult basic education enterprise in the United States. The AEA provides funding to states to develop and maintain basic educational programming for adults. Its history reflects the evolution of federal intervention in education and the nature of adult education in the United States.

Although education has traditionally been seen as a state/local prerogative, the federal government has provided aid in times of emergency. The Depression, the post-World War II focus on illiteracy, and human resource concerns were part of the impetus for increasing the federal role in adult education. Adult education associations saw federal aid as a means of promoting establishment of state directors of adult education and facilitating professionalization of the field.

These two strands converged in the early 1960s as adult basic education was proposed in various antipoverty packages. Education was recognized as a factor in improving the economic status of the poor and unemployed. In 1964, the Adult Basic Education program was passed as Title IIB of the Economic Opportunity Act, authorized through the Office of Economic Opportunity but administered by the U.S. Office of Education (USOE). The 1966 renewal of the act formally transferred the program to USOE, broadening its purpose. Under section 309 the act provided funding for teacher training and demonstration projects. The 1970 amendments changed the definition of adults to those 16 or older and expanding eligibility to include those who had not received secondary education. Other changes in the 1970s included the following:

- Creation of the National Advisory Council on Adult Education
- Allocation of 15 percent of state funds for special projects or training, effectively ending federal discretionary funding
- Emphasis by the USOE on section 309 projects, the only aspect allowing direct federal intervention
- Shift away from concern with grade level to functional literacy, influenced by the Adult Performance Level project

The rising concern for literacy in the 1980s became a national priority in the 1984 amendments to the AEA. Discretionary funds for research and development, dissemination, and demonstration projects again became available. The 1988 reauthorization substantially increased federal funds and included grants for workplace and English as a second language literacy. The National Literacy Act of 1991 continued the focus on literacy as a means of

solving many social problems and harkened back to the original emphasis of the act on development of a productive citizenry.

The following themes emerge from the history of the AEA:

- Divergence of purpose among the states, the federal government, and adult educators has limited effectiveness of the act.
- Despite growth in state commitment to adult education, most states do not have legislation guaranteeing adult education. Unlike children's education, the federal government still assumes the major funding share.
- Debate continues over the nature of the target population and appropriate nomenclature for the program.
- Little coordination exists among agencies serving adults.

The AEA has been successful in contributing to the growth of the field and the training of professionals. Although the use of a social welfare model has enabled passage, it has limited its appeal. Adult educators concerned with the marginality of their enterprise accepted the national attention despite any reservations about the purpose. Implementation of the AEA in its various incarnations shows that more public debate about the policy issues involved is needed.

Information on adult education legislation may be found in the ERIC database using the following descriptors: *Adult Basic Education, Adult Literacy, Educational History, *Educational Legislation, Federal Legislation, *Federal State Relationship, *Government Role, Literacy Education, Professional Associations, *State Federal Aid, States Powers. Asterisks indicate particularly relevant descriptors.

INTRODUCTION

At its passage, the Adult Education Act of 1966 was hailed as a landmark piece of legislation. For adult educators, it marked the first direct and sustained effort by the federal government in adult basic education for other than vocational or work training purposes. Although a full evaluation of the act is beyond the scope of this paper, one of its aims is to discuss the growth of the adult basic education enterprise in the United States as a result of this piece of legislation and to offer some analysis of what has been achieved.

What is called the Adult Education Act of 1966 was really an amended version of federal legislation that had already been included in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. In 1966, the act was formally transferred to the U.S. Office of Education, which until then had only administered the act for the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). Thus, 1966 has been posited as the anniversary because it is thought that in some sense adult education finally was recognized as a part of the U.S. educational system. Yet, the desired effects of this thrust have never been fully realized. By 1991, primarily as a result of the Adult Education Act and its successors, every state in the United States and its territories had some type of adult basic education and high school equivalency program. However, the kind of parity sought with elementary and secondary education has never been achieved. This paper begins an exploration of the differing expectations and arguments that framed the passage of the act and have continued to the present.

After a brief overview of the legislation, the study is divided into sections that are essentially chronological. The first part covers a discussion of the state of adult basic education in the United States in the 1950s. It examines the development of new associations, their functions and goals, and how they set priorities for adult education legislation. The second section deals with the 1960s, specifically the drafting and ultimate passage of the Adult Education Act within the War on Poverty program, the implications of this program, its implementation and impact. The third section covers the later amendments to the act in the late 1960s through 1980, and the fourth section analyzes the Adult Education Act under the Reagan administration.

It is hoped that this study will serve as a starting point for a more thorough analysis of the passage and implementation of the act.

LEGISLATIVE OVERVIEW

Over the course of the past 25 years (or 27 if we start counting from 1964), there has been remarkable consistency to the Adult Education Act (AEA) and its amendments. Essentially, the act has provided funding to states to develop, administer, and maintain basic education programs for adults. The legislation included both pre-high school and English as a second language programming. Although local and state educational agencies have maintained clear administrative control, the federal government has provided 90 percent of program costs with the states required to provide 10 percent and to maintain previous levels of funding. The federal government's support of local program services has been a significant factor for most states. Funding was contingent upon the submission of a state plan, the requirements for which have changed over time, becoming more specific and requiring more diverse and consistent community input. The list of providers was broadened over time from local educational agencies to nonprofit groups and private agencies.

Over the years the purpose has been widened to include secondary education and to provide for adults who need "to acquire basic skills necessary to function in society" (*Education Amendments of 1978*). Although the emphasis has always been on those lacking basic education and literacy, the law was amended in 1970 to allow funding of high school completion or equivalency programs. The minimum age of participants was originally 18, was amended to 16, and currently is 16 or the age of school-leaving as allowed by state law. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the AEA provided that the federal government set aside a fixed percentage of discretionary funds for demonstration projects, research projects, and teacher training. Because of disagreements with the states, this funding was transferred to the states, and no federal money was allocated for research or training for over 10 years. This was later reinstated in the act, but not funded again until 1988.

The 1966 AEA called for the establishment of an advisory committee, which was amended to a council in 1970 and which was eliminated in 1988. The purpose of the council was to advise the commissioner in the preparation of regulations, the development of policies, and the coordination of programs. It was also to prepare annual reports to the president on its findings and recommendations as well as to review the administration and effectiveness of programs.

In the past, the act specifically designated certain categories of groups as deserving of attention, in particular immigrants, the elderly, and Native Americans. For the most part, these categories have since been written out of the act.

The Adult Education Act has been successful in providing the funding for the development of adult education programs in all states and territories. It spawned the birth of an adult education bureaucracy on the state level and led to a massive growth in the numbers of adults being served by such programs. The program has been remarkably free from attack,

partly because the sums involved were so small, and partly because the need was great, as well as obvious. Except for the early Reagan years, the government appropriations grew steadily, but slowly. In 1966, the authorized allotment was $19,879,000; in 1988 the amount appropriated was $200 million for fiscal year 1989 with each state receiving at least $250,000. The rest of the available money was appropriated on the basis of the ratio of the number of eligible adults currently being served to the number of eligible adults in the state (U.S. House of Representatives 1991).

Despite the relative success of the programs, they remain marginal to the educational enterprise as a whole. The AEA is rarely discussed either in terms of the War on Poverty or the Great Society legislation on education. Certainly, the 1980s emphasis on literacy has meant greater visibility for adult education efforts, but these too raise questions about the reactive nature of adult education programming.

A few monographs have dealt with the history of the Adult Education Act itself. Vincent DeSanctis (1979) has written an excellent legislative history of the act through 1979, and Jeanine Ellis (1984) wrote a brief overview of the legislation through 1984. Finally, the National Advisory Council on Adult Education (NACAE 1980) has put together a very helpful summary of the pertinent changes in the legislation. This paper builds on these, while developing the underlying tensions at the heart of the legislation and their implications for program development and implementation.

The rest of this paper examines the unclear expectations of those involved in framing the bill and its amendments as well as the problems in implementation that hindered the program in its formative period. The principal issues to be discussed center around the initial framing of the legislation and its ultimate passage. In particular, this paper examines the different aspects of the adult education programs and the role of adult education as envisioned by the different factions of policy makers. It will also explore the legislative beginnings of the Adult Education Act and the various factors that were involved in its passage and its implementation. A brief discussion follows of how the legislation has changed over time and why, with an emphasis on recurring themes as they emerge over time. It is hoped that this monograph will serve as a point of departure for a fuller discussion of the shape that adult basic education has taken in the United States.

PRELUDE TO FEDERAL INTERVENTION

In discussing the passage and implementation of the Adult Education Act of 1966, two strands must be discussed. The first deals with the history of federal intervention in all aspects of education and the other with the particular history of adult education.

Education has been in the past (and still is today) seen as a local prerogative coming under state jurisdiction and control. This does not mean, however, that the federal government has totally ignored education, although its financial commitment has been relatively small. Federal intervention has been primarily a factor in areas that were deemed to be of overriding national concern. Thus the Morrill Act of 1862 began a policy of grants to universities for particular fields of study (agriculture and the mechanical arts). Later, the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 provided aid for vocational training (Tyler 1974).

The federal government has also been active in providing educational opportunities for veterans and servicemen and women. Initial legislation provided for rehabilitation, but under the G.I. Bill of Rights, this was extended to a broader aid program for all veterans, regardless of need.

Finally, the federal government has stepped into education when a dire emergency arose. The clearest example of this was during the Great Depression of the 1930s when federal monies were made available to hire teachers and start programs. The purposes were twofold--to give relief to unemployed teachers and to provide education in areas particularly hard hit by the Depression. This was clearly a temporary expedient in the face of emergency and, even so, programs needed to be devised that would not impinge on local control of the schools. Additionally, the post-Sputnik era saw an infusion of federal funds into science education and the introduction of the national program of student loans.

Throughout the 20th century, two large battles have shaped federal funding in education. They revolve around the question of local control, and they have been played out in terms of the place of religion in the public schools and integration. Both were decided by the Supreme Court, but are still very much alive today. Because resistance to these issues rested on the notion of states' rights (that is, the state's right to make laws and regulations regarding the schools without federal interference), those opposed, for example, to integration were also opposed to any federal aid to education. Efforts to introduce educational aid packages were consistently blocked by a coalition of the clergy (demanding funding for parochial schools), southerners fearful that any federal aid would lead to federal interference and control, and in-fighting among the educational lobbyists themselves. The deadlock was finally overcome with the launching of Sputnik and the perceived need to upgrade U.S. education in the name of national defense. More complete aid packages, however, continued to meet deep resistance (Graham 1984).

Aid to adult education followed the general pattern, although it can be seen that because of its very marginality, adult education sometimes served as a lead-in for federal programs. Thus, adults were certainly helped by most educational aid programs. In addition, programs for adults were deemed less controversial, easier to implement, and less likely to step on local toes. For example, during the Depression, unemployed teachers were used in literacy programs for adults (Tyack, Hansot, and Lowe 1984).

A particular area of concern was the plight of illiterate people with sporadic calls to address the problem of illiteracy on the national level. Since at least the turn of the century, writers and advocates had been concerned with literacy as a necessity in an increasingly mechanized and technological society. After World War II, there were sporadic efforts to deal with adult illiteracy as a national problem. The two World Wars had focused attention on the problems of illiteracy and national defense. The issue had first been raised during World War I when many soldiers were found to be illiterate. During the second World War, initial efforts to deem illiterate people unfit for service gave way to training programs that had remarkable success. But the issue raised consciousness of the problem and heightened concern over the cost to the nation in terms of closed opportunities. Illiteracy came to be perceived as a situation that threatened economic growth and national security. Following World War II, these calls took on new urgency. Ambrose Caliver of the U.S. Office of Education was a major leader in this area. Caliver began his career in adult education working on adult education projects for blacks. At the Office of Education, he was a specialist on Negro education. He later went on to head the Adult Education Section within the Office of Education and was president of the Adult Education Association of the USA at the time of his early death in 1962. Caliver equated human resource development with national defense, seeing that both peace and war demanded higher levels of skill and were predicated on basic literacy (Caliver 1951; Quigley 1990). One of the earliest efforts to deal with the problem was the illiteracy bill introduced into the Senate by Harley M. Kilgore of West Virginia in 1948 and again in 1949. The act itself was drafted primarily by Ambrose Caliver (Hutchison 1975; Kilgore 1952).

Caliver's work in the Office of Education was buttressed by the growing concern with the issue of labor force training and the conservation of human resources evinced by the Eisenhower administration. Ginzberg and Bray's 1953 work on the problems of the uneducated was an early assessment of the problem.

After World War II, Eisenhower as president of Columbia University drew on his concern with the waste of human resources he had witnessed during World War II in establishing a research project titled "The Conservation of Human Resources." The purposes of this project were to study fundamental aspects of human resources and to show how this knowledge could be translated into specific policies that would reduce this waste. The project was cooperative, jointly funded by such businesses as American Can, Columbia Broadcasting System, Consolidated Edison, DuPont, General Electric, General Foods, RCA, and Standard Oil among others. The Ford Foundation, the federal government, and trade unions also provided funding and sponsorship (Ginzberg and Bray 1953).

This project focused on the relationship between education and work performance. Although the findings and recommendations focused most on the need for elementary education, there were important

implications for adult education. The principal finding was that illiteracy and lack of education resulted in a significant underutilization of human resources that affected defense and economic security. The problems were particularly severe in the Southeast, especially among blacks. Other pockets of extreme deprivation could be found among migrant workers and Native Americans. Ginzberg and Bray maintained that the problem was so widespread (even though admittedly illiteracy itself had significantly decreased since 1900) that it called for federal intervention and policy. They laid out the importance of adult and literacy education, particularly as it had already been so successful in the armed services.

This notion of conservation of human resources had a powerful impact on thinking about adult education. It provided an important context for strengthening literacy education on all levels, and it validated the importance of adult education within this policy. The impact of this thinking could be seen in legislation that preceded the Great Society legislation, particularly the Manpower Training and Development Act of 1962. The proponents of this approach were not using adult education as anything other than a means to an end--utilization of human resources. Basic education was deemed the first step in this process and came to be considered an aspect of such planning.

As this concern with human resources grew, adult educators themselves became more interested in exploring the possibility of federal aid. The discussion here, however, was framed differently and hinged on the place of adult education in U.S. society. It needs to be stressed that there was no one monolithic adult education view, but rather different factions.

One group, represented by Morse Cartwright and the American Association for Adult Education (AAAE), viewed adult education as a voluntary activity. The idea of "learners helping learners" was deeply embedded and the view was that the bureaucratic structures of the public education system, as well as the nation's colleges and universities, had ruined U.S. education and that adult education might be able to correct the increasing imbalance. This meant local control and the encouragement of the individual, not the creation of a new federal bureaucracy within adult education. Thus Cartwright saw federal aid during the Depression as two-sided. Although important because of the immediate relief provided, he felt that it set an uncomfortable precedent that should be ended as soon as possible.

Because of the position taken by the AAAE and its sponsor, the Carnegie Corporation, the needs of public school educators were not addressed by the AAAE. These public educators affiliated instead with the National Education Association's (NEA) Department of Adult Education, which worked to spread information and set up networks among basic education teachers in the United States.

Looking at the history of NEA's Department of Adult Education, we can trace an evolution in their thinking about how adult education could be developed and (although not put exactly this way) professionalized. Some of the changes were due to organizational changes as the NEA's Department of Adult Education first merged with the AAAE, then helped form a new organization--the Adult Education Association of the USA (AEA USA)--and finally broke away from the AEA USA to form its own group, the National Association of Public School Adult Educators (NAPSAE), supported by the NEA but still affiliated with the AEA USA. In the 1980s, NAPSAE, which had changed its name to NAPCAE (the National Association of Public and Continuing Adult

Educators), merged with the AEA to form a new organization, the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE).

When NAPSAE was founded in 1952, its early purposes, as expressed in its constitution, included the promotion of adult education programs that would benefit the field and the development of criteria for specific areas of expertise such as needs assessment, program development, administration, and evaluation. NAPSAE was a department of the NEA (its full title was NAPSAE: a Department of the NEA). The staff of the NEA's Division of Adult Education Service supplied the staff and other support services to both the department (after 1945) and to NAPSAE from 1952 to 1970 (Luke 1991a). Robert Luke as a paid employee of the division served as part-time secretary of NAPSAE. Close communication was also maintained with the Adult Education Branch of the U.S. Office of Education (Luke 1991b).

Initially, NAPSAE aided the development of adult education through the dissemination of information, but quickly moved to the political arena in its efforts to further the cause of adult education. An early 1952 study had indicated that adult education programs in public schools were growing and that there was movement to hire directors of these programs (Luke 1991b).

NAPSAE, with the help of the Fund for Adult Education (FAE), tried to focus attention on adult education through the promotion of the hiring of state directors of adult education. This emerged as a high priority during the 1950s. With small grants of $8,000 for a year to particular states, NAPSAE helped install state directors in Colorado, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Georgia, Utah, Iowa, Ohio, Maryland, and Kansas (Luke 1991b). It was felt that, with state directors in place, it would be possible to set state priorities, oversee programs, and ensure some form of state allocation for adult education. Once the directors were in place, NAPSAE, with FAE funding, developed training programs for them with particular emphasis on the importance of liberal education, a concern of the FAE and its parent, the Ford Foundation. Since education was within state and local domain, it seemed logical to try to buttress the position of adult education on the state level.

While the grant money was available, this program met with some success, but despite previous commitments, not all states continued the use of the state directors once funding had run out. Even those that did used the directors for a multitude of other purposes (Edelson 1991).

In the late 1950s, NAPSAE began to promote greater federal involvement in adult education. Assessing the states' ability to finance adult education programs as minimal, the association felt that the impetus needed to come from the federal government. Thomas J. McLernon, who was employed by the NEA's Division of Adult Education Service as assistant director, was initially named chair of the NAPSAE legislative committee. He was soon reassigned to serve the committee as a staff person, serving in an almost full-time capacity to work on adult education legislation. In performing this role, he drew on the already well-established research and lobbying apparatus of the NEA (Luke 1991b).

The NAPSAE effort signalled a shift in focus from the state to the federal level, but the basic objectives remained constant--to develop state-level adult education programs that would facilitate and professionalize adult education on the local level as well. It was hoped that federal seed money would force attention onto adult education and this would in

turn provide the possibility of greater federal funding.

The NAPSAE/NEA effort centered on lobbying for passage of an Adult Education Act. The purpose of this effort was to help professionalize adult education and raise its status. As envisioned by this group, adult education would become an equal of the other branches of education, with adequate state and local funding.

Some of these varying forces came together in 1957 when Ambrose Caliver organized the National Commission on Adult Literacy, an independent, nonprofit group dedicated to working toward a solution to the crisis in illiteracy. Representatives from the Office of Education, the Adult Education Association, business and industry, and Eli Ginzberg's Conservation of Human Resources group joined together to lobby for an adult literacy program. Building on the work of Ginzberg, Caliver, and others, the National Commission saw its purposes as the following:

- Helping to create a national awareness "of the magnitude, seriousness, and urgency of the problem of illiteracy"
- Assisting in the development of an understanding of the implication of illiteracy and its relation to national security, economic prosperity, and U.S. "social and cultural development"
- Collecting and disseminating information about illiteracy
- Promoting community action
- Providing technical assistance (National Commission on Adult Literacy, June 17, 1957, p. 16)

Considering the various forces coming to play in the passage of the Adult Education Act of 1966 and its predecessors, this activity is indicative of the evolution of the professional adult education movement. Yet, federal policy does not have such a simple cause-and-effect development, and in fact other concurrent streams need to be followed, which contributed to the development of the act as well. Although labor force experts and adult educators called for fuller basic education programs, it was the poverty program that ultimately allowed passage of an act.

THE KENNEDY AND JOHNSON YEARS

Although adult educators hail the Adult Education Act as an education bill, this is open to question. Clearly, it can also be analyzed as part of the poverty program or as a complement to the labor force training acts of the Kennedy era. Part of the problem is that by the time that the initial adult education program was passed in 1964, the attitude of the adult education community was that any recognition of adult education was good. In addition, they did not feel that the true answer to the problem lay in the federal sphere. It was thought that federal legislation could possibly provide needed attention to the problem of adult illiteracy. Finally, there were differing views within the education community about what the law should accomplish and how to get it passed. Thus, the need for adult education had to be demonstrated in terms of national priority in order to overcome resistance to treading on this volatile states' rights issue.

The first version of the Adult Education Act was introduced by Representative Carl Perkins of Kentucky following President Kennedy's February 6, 1962, message on education. In this speech, Kennedy decried the "twin tragedies of illiteracy and dependence" passed "from generation to generation." Although part of the administration's package of education proposals, the issue of literacy received little overt backing from the administration. The entire package was defeated, with a few noncontroversial exceptions, floundering on the questions related to aid to parochial schools and states' rights. Although these did not directly affect the Adult Education Act itself, the volatile debates consigned the legislation to failure (Graham 1984).

Nevertheless, the 1962 hearings in Washington, D.C., and Kentucky point up some of the major issues in the legislation that was eventually passed, as well as the intent of the players. The very fact that an adult literacy bill had been introduced under administration sponsorship was seen as a major breakthrough by Caliver (1962).

The proposed 1962 version of the act itself was quite limited in scope. Using a formula based on the census figures for the number of illiterate people in each state, grants were to be made to the states to establish pilot programs, assist in the costs of instructing adults, and assist in developing and improving technical and state services. The programs would be administered by the states, although they would need to report to the Commissioner of Education and would be held accountable to the federal government for the proper disbursement of funds. States would need to submit a plan for how the money would be used before it could be allocated. The other part of the bill authorized appropriations to institutions of higher education in the development of methods and materials appropriate for the teaching of adults. The amount of money authorized was quite small--$5 million the first year and $10 million after that for 4 years.

The purpose of the bill was to provide seed money, not to support adult education. The hearings emphasized that

even a little bit of federal money would furnish the needed impetus to direct state attention to the area of adult education. In addition, in states that had tried to fund adult education, it would make up for previous cutbacks. Specifically, it was hoped that states would use the money to develop state offices of adult education, since at the time only a few states had a full-time adult education staff member. The precedent was the Rural Library Services Act, which had provided seed money to spur local interest in the establishment of libraries. This was a low-cost program that adult education could emulate (U.S. House of Representatives 1962).

The bill received very little objection during the course of the hearings. The usual objections to educational legislation were not voiced, and Perkins even stated at one point that he saw it as a piece of states' rights legislation. It received strong southern backing with individuals from Kentucky, Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, West Virginia, Virginia, and Florida all voicing their support. The way the bill was worded, the implication was that the states would still maintain complete control. This led to the question in the South of "separate but equal," a practice that was still followed by the southern adult education programs. For example, according to testimony, Louisiana had about an equal number of blacks and whites in separate programs and was anxious for federal aid, because it saw no problem with the states' rights issue (they did not see the program as interfering with the maintenance of these segregated programs). But this brought the objection from Donald C. Bruce (the representative from Indiana) that in fact the proposed legislation should interfere with states' rights, because by 1962 separate but equal was not the law of the land. This issue was also raised with Mississippi's adult education witness, who admitted that Mississippi might have to refuse the money if Congress insisted on integrating adult education programs (U.S. House of Representatives 1962).

By and large, testimony focused on corroborating the need for legislation. Some particular issues arose with the focus of the bill, that is, what population should it address. This can be seen in changes in the name of the act itself, which indicated the confusion over the purpose and the proposed population to be served. First introduced as the Adult Literacy Act of 1962, it was changed even before the hearings to the Adult Education Act of 1962 and ultimately became the Adult Basic Education Act of 1962. The changes were an attempt to deal with the criticisms of involved parties who had somewhat competing aims. Thus, adult literacy was deemed to be too narrow. However, the Office of Education found the term adult education too broad and requested an amendment to narrow the purview to adult basic education. In testimony, Assistant Secretary of Education Wilbur Cohen indicated that he feared that the use of "adult education" was too broad and would open up the implementation of the legislation. The program needed to be "delimited" (U.S. House of Representatives 1962, p. 42).

On the other hand, Robert Luke, speaking for NAPSAE, felt that the sixth-grade cut-off of the bill was too low and that the high school diploma was essential for true independent functioning in U.S. society. However, Luke felt that "adult education" was better than "literacy" as a title for the act because it carried less stigma. By simply changing the title, Luke felt that the legislators were making the bill more palatable to a wider group of potential students (U.S. House of Representatives 1962, p. 69).

Testimony on the proposed act fell into several general categories. These can be roughly described as statements of need (that is, the numbers of illiterate people in states), examples of exemplary programs, the need for more money, statements about the possibility of growth with more federal money, and statements about adult education as a national issue (that is, problems of illiteracy or low educational functioning and the effect these have on defense, the economy, and hence on society).

The initial terms of the national issue had been framed by Kennedy when he said--

> the economic result of this lack of schooling is often chronic unemployment, dependency, or delinquency, with all the consequences this entails for these individuals, their families, their communities, and the Nation. (U.S. House of Representatives 1962, p. 7).

Specifically, the national issues were framed around the problem of labor force training. A number of the witnesses maintained that this adult education legislation was a key to the success of the Manpower Training and Development Act (MTDA), as well as the Area Redevelopment Act (ARA). Both programs were predicated on the idea of identifying areas that were underdeveloped (ARA) and then providing training to the unemployed (MDTA), but could not go forward if the individuals needing the training could not read or write.

The problem was seen as particularly prevalent in the rural South and the urban, industrialized areas of the North. Even in the North, however, the problem was ascribed to the poor state of the South's economy and its educational system, so that migrants brought their problems north (U.S. House of Representatives 1962). It was felt that the United States was undergoing a second industrial revolution, which was bringing about a crisis in employment. As factories became automated, unskilled workers could not be retrained because they lacked the basic education considered necessary for more advanced training. The unemployment of the 1960s was considered to be different from that of the 1930s. The Great Depression had meant "mass unemployment"; the 1960s were experiencing "class unemployment" and the remedies needed to be geared toward a particular class (Testimony of William L. Batt, Jr., U.S. House of Representatives 1962, p. 204).

Even in 1962, the Adult Education Act was seen by some as part of a war on poverty. William L. Batt, Jr., ARA Administrator, specifically noted that the legislation was part of a whole, concerted effort to deal with problems of chronic unemployment and dependence. "This war on poverty is all of a piece" (ibid., p. 205).

There was little substantive criticism of the legislation itself. The issue was whether it set a precedent as far as federal aid to education was concerned. The efforts to set this legislation apart as a special situation ultimately failed, as the bill met the fate of the rest of Kennedy's legislative package, but the emphasis on the social welfare aspects of the bill enabled it to be included in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

In 1963 the act was again introduced into the House and again died in committee. At the same time, however, the Manpower Training and Development Act was amended to provide support to trainees for basic education. This amendment had been devised because of the failure of the MDTA to attract the hardcore unemployed. This deficiency was thought to be the result of the poor skills of the most needy.

In 1964, the Adult Basic Education program was passed as Title IIB of the Economic Opportunity Act (P.L. 88-452). This program incorporated the previous Adult Education Act of 1963, which had not been enacted.

The Economic Opportunity Act, which was signed by President Johnson in August 1964, was a landmark piece of legislation. It represented the first comprehensive poverty program developed at the federal level and included controversial pieces of community action and development, job training, and education. The principal thrust of the legislation was to try to alleviate the problem of poverty in prosperous times. Seeing the poor as those lacking skills as well as a voice in government, the act's aim was to establish a federal program that would bypass state bureaucracies and address the specific needs of the poor. It mandated local and community control of programs and was committed to the development of skills, but not the creation of jobs.

The adult education program was one small piece of this legislation. Supporters of previous adult education bills pushed to have this program included within the Economic Opportunity Act as a matter of expedience. The placement of the program there, although logical to a certain extent, created inherent contradictions with other pieces of the legislation. From the educator's point of view, the purpose of the program was to provide seed money to states for the development of their own programs. In particular, the strongest supporters, such as NAPSAE, were concerned with the development of the state directors of adult education rather than with the promotion of strictly local programs. Ultimately, NAPSAE's aim was parity with other levels of the state educational bureaucracy. Naturally, the implementation was very much tied to state educational agencies. Although authorized through the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) under Sargent Shriver, the Adult Education program was administered through the Office of Education within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW). Shriver was not enthusiastic about the program; in fact he opposed its inclusion under the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA), but was overruled by Congressional committees. Samuel Halperin, Carl Perkins' legislative assistant, was largely responsible for both the actual writing of the adult education section and its placement in the EOA (Luke 1991a). Shriver saw the adult education program as antithetical to the purposes of the EOA. The EOA, after all, was concerned with expanding the base of participation and did this by circumventing established bureaucratic offices. A program such as adult education, however, was designed to become a part of the established state education agencies (DeSanctis 1979).

To confuse the issue further, the adult education community itself, except for NAPSAE, did little to promote passage. The principal lobbying group was NAPSAE, with the AEA USA offering support but not much else. The lack of a coordinated legislative thrust was a concern among some AEA members. Writing of the passage of the various pieces of adult education legislation during the previous year, Blue Carstenson (1965), chair of the legislative policy committee of the AEA USA stated--

> We have passed historic landmarks, and we can be proud of our achievements. Only because of a lack of opposition and vast need, have we achieved this legislation with meager lobbying and legislative work. . . . I decry the extremely low priority put on Federal Adult Education legislation by

the Adult Education Association. (p. 1)

The association seems to have been somewhat confused about what stand to take in regard to the legislative packages being discussed. On the one hand, they needed to support any adult education legislation on the horizon, but on the other hand, they were fearful about the emphasis on basic education, with some members seeking something much broader. The result was that the association supported the legislation, but reserved its most energetic lobbying for the development of other legislation that was considered to be more far reaching (Hallenbeck 1965).

Whereas NAPSAE working with the NEA had a well-developed legislative program, AEA USA struggled to figure out how to operate in Washington with no budget and few contacts. In March 1965, they were still trying to figure out how other associations found out about legislative developments and informed their membership (Williams 1965).

As a result of this vacuum, the legislation reflected NAPSAE's concerns as filtered through the political process. The act provided federal grants to states to develop pilot programs, to help local agencies develop instructional programs for adults, and to help localities acquire information about materials and teaching methods. The funds were also to be used to help the state education agencies develop supervisory roles in adult education. In order to qualify for funding, states had to submit state plans that described the administration of the program, provide state reports to the director of OEO, and indicate cooperative arrangements between the state education agency and state health departments. Two percent of the funding was set aside for Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, and the Virgin Islands. The rest was to be distributed to the states according to the relative number of persons 18 or older who had completed less than 6 years of school. No state was to receive less than $50,000, and each state's allotment would be reduced proportionately to meet this requirement. The federal government was to cover 90 percent of the adult education program during fiscal year 1966 and 50 percent in fiscal year 1967.

The purpose of the act was narrowed from the earlier bills to focus on individuals 18 or older "whose inability to read or write the English language constitutes a substantial impairment of their ability to obtain or retain employment" (National Advisory Council on Adult Education 1980, p. 11). Thus, the purpose of this basic education was to enable employment and was not seen as a right in itself.

There was some difficulty in getting started in terms of making allocations and dispensing funds. Later Congressional testimony indicated that lack of start-up time and some confusion about the regulations added to the delays. By 1966, when the act was up for renewal, all states had developed adult education programs. Because of the initial problems, the first year's funding was not completely allocated and was carried over to fiscal year 1966. Thus in 1965, federal funding was $4,444,703 and 38,000 students were served. Only 14 states received funding during this first year, but by the end of fiscal year 1966 all states had submitted plans and received funding. Government funding rose to $35,501,267 (including $14,443,164 carried over from 1965) and the number of participants rose to 335,000 (U.S. Office of Education 1967).

In 1966 the adult education program (along with the other poverty programs) was scheduled for renewal. Adult education efforts focused on moving the entire program over to the U.S. Office of

Education (USOE). In November 1966, Johnson signed the amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, which included Title III or the Adult Education Act of 1966. There were several issues related to moving the program entirely over to USOE. Adult educators had used the Economic Opportunity Act as an expedient move to get the act passed and break the bottleneck. Since the real goal of the adult educators was to gain admittance to the educational bureaucracy, NAPSAE pushed for moving the program out of the OEO and totally under the purview of USOE. In addition, there was concern that if the program remained with the OEO, Shriver might succeed in making it part of the poverty program. Robert Luke of NAPSAE testified about his concern that emphasis on the program as a poverty program would keep out those who were not in poverty, but were in need of its services (DeSanctis 1979).

Again, NAPSAE led the lobbying effort. The AEA USA, while issuing supportive statements, did not see itself as the primary beneficiary of this legislation. The AEA legislative committee was concerned that this was a public school education bill and sought to broaden it after it was drafted. Thus, there was a distinction between basic education and such programs as consumer, parent, and civic education, which were thought to be covered under the Hartke bill (Pyle 1966).

The purpose of the act was broadened somewhat to strengthen the nonvocational focus. The idea was to go beyond the concept of education for employment to include the performance of various roles as parent and citizen. Yet, expand the purpose as they would, the writers of the act could not escape the need for framing the legislation in terms of national priorities and not an individual right to education. This approach would need to be fought on the state level. For federal aid, the program had to demonstrate an emergency situation, which only federal intervention could alleviate.

The act called for a program very similar to that already developed under the OEO. Funds for state programs were to be allocated on the same basis as previously. The states still needed to submit a plan that was more broadly defined to address progress of all segments of the adult population in all areas of the state and grants to public and private nonprofit agencies for special projects, teacher training, and cooperation with community action and other poverty programs. Special projects were defined as "involving the use of innovative methods, systems, materials, or programs of national significance of special value" (National Advisory Council on Adult Education 1980, p. 15).

The federal government would pay up to 90 percent of the cost of establishing or expanding programs, and nonfederal expenditure could not be less than it had been the previous year. This was a special concern on the part of the legislators, because the act was not designed to substitute federal funding for state funding, but rather to stimulate growth in programming in this area. It was therefore essential that states continue to fund their programs as they had before. The act stipulated that the Commissioner of Education was to serve as the chair of a National Advisory Committee on Adult Basic Education (NACABE), with the president appointing seven additional members. This committee was to advise the commissioner in developing regulations, review the administration and effectiveness of the ABE programs, and make annual reports to the president. There is little evidence that the committee did much during these years (DeSanctis 1979).

In fiscal year 1967, $26,280,000 was appropriated to the states with 388,935 participants enrolled in the program. In addition, $1,520,162 went to special projects with 13 projects funded; $1,399,838 went to teacher training with 1,197 teachers trained. In fiscal year 1968, more money was allocated to special projects and teacher training ($6,550,000 and $1,500,000 respectively). Twenty-one projects were funded and 2,004 staff trained. The funding for the state program rose to $32,200,000 and 455,730 participants were enrolled (National Advisory Council on Adult Education 1980).

The act provided for federal funding of demonstration projects and teacher training (10-20 percent of the money authorized was to be reserved for these purposes). The allocation of funding for staff training and special projects (sections 309c and 309b of the act) was considered to be of great importance to the adult education field. It was thought that the training of teachers and the development of materials was a key to the success of the act and that without this emphasis adult basic education programs would not succeed. The underdevelopment of the field was a consistent concern of adult educators. Of course, NAPSAE had already targeted the state level as the most important in developing adult education, and they were the main lobbyists in pushing for inclusion of the training and development parts of the act.

In 1965, the first ABE teacher training programs were developed. Also in 1965, federal funds were used to conduct a comparative field test of instructional materials and methods. Although Title IIB of the Economic Opportunity Act provided funds for the states to offer teacher training programs, it did not subsidize any programs to train teacher trainers. To meet this need, staff members of the U.S. Office of Education's Adult Education Branch presented a proposal to the Fund for Adult Education for the support of the costs of teacher training projects in three universities in the states of Maryland, New Mexico, and Washington. Part of the proposal, which was funded, called for NAPSAE to convene a planning workshop and to develop a publication on adult basic education methodology. In 1966, nine teacher training institutes were held in each of the nine USOE regions, and in 1967 this was expanded to 19 institutes (Luke 1991a; NACABE 1968; NAPSAE 1966).

A key aspect of this training program was the idea that an accelerated program could train teachers to teach in adult basic education programs. As developed, the training programs had several elements: "a national core curriculum, national and regional conferences, on-campus training institutes, and local pre-service and in-service training sessions" (NACABE 1968, p. 52). This was seen as part of an experiment in the rapid training of teachers.

As written, the 309 projects were not for basic research, but rather for demonstration projects and "other applied research activities" (Radwin 1984, p. 4). This provision sparked greater controversy than any other section of the AEA as disputes arose over the nature of some of the projects funded. Ultimately, this became one of the areas disputed in the legislative arena, bringing about a decade's suspension of direct federal funding of such projects. Funding decisions for special projects were transferred to the states and the federal research efforts were eliminated for a decade.

Two kinds of 309b projects were funded: special projects with national significance, and what were called "local impact" projects or those projects that held "unusual promise in promoting a comprehensive

approach to the problems of persons with basic educational deficiencies" (Radwin 1984, p. 5). The latter programs ultimately received most of the 309b funding.

The AEA was amended and extended in 1968. The base allotment to the states was raised from $50,000 to $100,000 with the federal government paying 100 percent of the costs of the program in the Trust Territory of the Pacific. In addition, private nonprofit agencies were now considered to be eligible for state grants. In fiscal year 1969, $35 million was allotted to state programs, resulting in 484,626 participants. Twenty-eight special projects received $7 million in funding and 1,587 staff were trained for $2 million in 1969. In FY 1970, $40 million was allotted to state programs with 535,613 people enrolled. In 1970, 41 projects were funded for $7.9 million and $2 million was spent to train 1,727 staff members (National Advisory Council on Adult Education 1980).

THE 1970s: BROADENING THE SCOPE

The 1970 amendments to the Adult Education Act expanded its purpose to include those who had not received a secondary education. The basic aim remained the same, although the wording changed slightly, to provide skills necessary to gain the training needed to "become more employable, productive and responsible citizens" (National Advisory Council on Adult Education 1980, p. 35). In addition, the definition of adult was changed to include those 16 or older. This amendment was part of an already old issue. Adult educators, led by NAPSAE, had from the beginning favored extending the act to cover secondary school completion. Luke had testified to this effect in 1962. There were a number of reasons for this preference. Secondary-level students were easier to recruit, more motivated, and hence easier to retain. Through NAPSAE, states led the lobbying for this change (DeSanctis 1979). The legislators, on the other hand, preferred the basic education emphasis.

The base state allotment was raised to $150,000 for each state, and the new distribution formula reflected the new eligibility of those lacking a secondary school certificate. In addition, in an effort to push the development of programs and state supervision, a sum of not more than 5 percent of program costs would be used to cover administrative costs and the development of a state plan. Although funding of secondary education was now included, the federal government required that state plans give special emphasis to adult basic education programs. Finally, the legislation established the National Advisory Council on Adult Education (NACAE), made up of 15 members. The chair was to be elected by the members and the duties were the same as those performed by the earlier National Advisory Committee on Adult Basic Education (NACAE 1980).

Further amendments to the Adult Education Act were made in 1972. The principal change here concerned grants to support the education of Native Americans (ibid.).

More changes were introduced with the 1974 amendments to the Adult Education Act. The allotment for U.S. territories was reduced to no more than 1 percent of appropriated funds. New requirements for state plans included the following:

- A cap of no more than 20 percent of state grant money could be allocated to institutionalized adults.
- The plans had to make provision for cooperation with labor force development and training programs, occupational educational programs, and reading improvement programs.
- Not more than 20 percent of state funds could be allocated to secondary programs.
- The plans needed to include provisions relating to the needs of those with limited English by providing bilingual adult education programs.

The commissioner was empowered to establish a clearinghouse to collect and disseminate information on the Adult Education Act and adult education programs. The commissioner was also authorized to make state grants to programs dealing with the uneducated elderly. Finally, the legislation permitted the establishment of state advisory councils to be made up of individuals knowledgeable in the field of adult education, representatives of state and local educational agencies, those who received adult education training, and public representatives. The council was to advise the state on the development and administration of the state plan and on long-range planning. It would also prepare annual reports and have at least four meetings per year.

The amendments also called for the addition of someone with special knowledge of adults with limited English to the membership of the advisory council. Finally, the amendments authorized that no state grants should be less than 90 percent of the grant made in fiscal year 1973 (NACAE 1980).

In addition, 15 percent of the state funds were to be used for special projects or training. This seemingly innocuous statement signaled the end of federal discretionary funding and was a result of controversies over the ways that the U.S. Office of Education's Division of Adult Education had allocated funds. Up to 1974, the federal spending on special projects had allowed for the greatest federal involvement and hence the controversy. During the years of the funding, the views were predictably mixed, with some saying there was no impact and others that the projects were influential. Radwin believes that there were major accomplishments, particularly the Teachers College study that resulted in *Last Gamble on Education* (Mezirow et al. 1975). This study affected adult education legislation by suggesting the importance of community organizations in successful adult education programs. By providing key evidence, it was a factor in changing the legislation allowing grants to nonpublic school institutions (Radwin 1984, p. 17).

Despite these successes, local officials often resented federal meddling. In fact, since federal intervention had been one of the primary issues in discussion over passage, the 309 projects were the only aspect of the AEA that allowed for direct federal intervention. The grants reflected a federal agenda, while also reflecting issues in the broader field of adult education. The Division of Adult Education used 309b projects to develop the field of adult education in terms of curriculum, assessment, recruitment, teacher training, state staff development, and resource development (Radwin 1984).

Program priorities were derived from the Commissioner of Education's national goals and priorities. In 1972, all 309b funds went to Model Cities adult education, adult Right to Read effort, Career Education, and Meeting Special Needs of Educational Disadvantaged Adults. This active role carried over into the solicitation of proposals and help in their development. In the early years, there was much informal dialogue with the director of the Division of Adult Education, Paul Delker, and other staff members in the development of proposals. The federal officials were thus instrumental in the development of proposals and could "guide and mold the 309 program" (Radwin 1984, p. 11).

In addition to soliciting proposals, the division also determined which proposals to fund. The division took an "activist" posture in carrying out this decision-making function. This was especially clear in decisions concerning the South, where black institutions and communities were

often not included in proposals or (because of local stipulations) were prevented from submitting their own proposals. Delker sought ways to make exceptions to local restrictions, such as state regulations on local matching funds (Radwin 1984, p. 12).

Federal officials were involved in the dissemination of 309b projects, taking an active role in arranging conference presentations, helping the projects develop contacts with each other, and arranging regional staff development conferences to disseminate project information.

The division, Delker in particular, tried to keep abreast of events in the field and was open to discussion with adult educators. Those who had the greatest influence were researchers. There was little input from the National Advisory Council or its predecessor committee. In terms of the field, the early training grants were among the most influential. From 1966-1971, staff training projects were carried out in summer institutes. These were popular and well received, but according to James Parker of the Department of Education's Division of Adult Education, they were expensive (about $1,000 per person) and "risky--if a participant later left the ABE field, the investment was lost" (Radwin 1984, p. 25). In order to overcome these problems and institutionalize adult education training, federal officials began to fund undergraduate and graduate programs in universities and colleges. The model for this was developed in 1969 in the Southeast, under a contract with a consortium of eight states. In addition to degree programs in adult education, noncredit courses, consultation with local ABE programs, training of state adult education staff members, and the development of a regional seminar were offered. In the first year, 13 institutions started graduate adult education programs. The program was so successful that it was replicated in other areas. This regional staff development approach received the bulk of 309 staff development funds. "The regional approach established post-secondary programs in all fifty states and helped increase the number of post-secondary programs from a dozen in the mid-1960s to about 100 by 1975. . . . In the eyes of many, the regional staff development projects remain one of the 309 program's most significant and enduring contributions" (Radwin 1984, p. 26).

Radwin's study of 309 projects emphasized the role of the USOE's Division of Adult Education and particularly of Paul Delker, its director from 1967 until 1986. According to Radwin, Delker saw adult basic education as "a powerful tool for social change" (ibid., p. 8). The 309 programs were the primary means of bringing about this change.

The principal problems of the 309 programs were that they never established their own constituencies and some of the programs alienated state adult education directors. In terms of constituency the problem was that most programs funded were not transferable but local, and thus never built up sufficient visibility. Continuous dissemination problems added to the lack of exposure. Most projects never produced anything beyond a final report, so that few other programs ever heard about their results. According to the interviews conducted by Radwin in 1984, many felt that the projects were not always well chosen and some were of low quality.

The state directors' dislike of the program came from different perspectives. Some saw it as ineffective and wasteful, since they never saw the results. Others resented Delker's activism, particularly the fact that he often funded projects in their states without consulting them. He went against state policy, for example, in

Mississippi when he went around state rules to ensure that black communities could obtain funding and funded state projects that created influence centers within the state, but outside of the state director's control. Delker's predecessor, Jules Pagano, had also upset local politicians when he funded projects that went against local politics, such as angering Mayor Daley by funding Jesse Jackson's Operation Push program (DeSanctis 1979; Radwin 1984).

Most writers attribute the program's demise to the Adult Performance Level (APL) controversy, but the issues are not so simple. The federally funded APL study extended the definition of functional literacy. The original APL project was a 5-year study conducted at the University of Texas to identify those competencies "functional to economic and educational success in today's society" (APL Project 1975, quoted in Beder 1991, p. 4). This was a departure from earlier approaches to functional literacy, which had been concerned with basic survival skills. The Adult Performance Level project distinguished five competency areas: consumer economics, occupational knowledge, health, community resources, and government and law. The project identified the skills necessary for "effective" functioning in each of these areas. The methodology used to deduce these competencies led to widespread criticism of the project and its outcomes. In particular, criticism focused on the middle-class bias of the project, which was seen as shifting attention away from a more client-centered approach (APL Project 1975; Beder 1991).

Although the APL study was widely influential, and in fact was developed into specific curricula by the states in the late 1970s, the federal initiative came in for much criticism. On the one hand, the APL study brought adult basic education much needed attention. However, the greatest problem was the introduction of what was perceived to be an agenda for a federal curriculum. Additionally, the competency thrust went in the opposite direction of some aspects of the state adult education programs that were developing General Educational Development (GED) programs (DeSanctis 1979). Radwin says that "in the end, APL served to legitimate a truly adult oriented adult basic education" (Radwin 1984, p. 18).

There was also opposition to the way discretionary grants were awarded. Many saw it as political, with grants going to those with political connections, whether they were minority groups or those in Carl Perkins' Congressional district. Also, there was dislike of the emphasis on university-funded programs (DeSanctis 1979; Radwin 1984).

Ironically, a chief factor here was the growth of state directors' importance, a primary goal of the legislation. As they grew in status, state directors resented the discretionary funds of the federal government and felt that local needs would be better served if the money were controlled through the states. In 1978, federal discretionary funds were again written into the legislation (DeSanctis 1979) but were not allocated until 1988.

Although the elimination of this discretionary money was important, the federal government did not lose all influence. The states still had to meet federal priorities in awarding these grants and the APL study was extremely influential. Despite the controversy, competency-based instruction was widely adopted. According to one survey, 75 percent of the respondents indicated use of competency-based instruction under limited circumstances. They did not, however, see it serving as the foundation for an entire program (Delker 1984; Young et al. 1980).

In 1978, the AEA was extensively revised. Of great importance was the shift in purpose with the addition of the statement that the purpose was to "enable all adults to acquire basic skills necessary to function in society." In addition, the definition of the adults to be served by the program was amended to read those who "lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to enable them to function effectively in society" (National Advisory Council on Adult Education 1980, p. 36). According to Delker (1984), this change reflected a commitment to the idea that adult basic education was not an end in itself, but rather a means to full human development. Of even greater significance was the shift away from concern with grade level to functional literacy. Delker attributes this shift to the work of the Adult Performance Level (APL) Project, which sought to "systematically identify the educational requirements for adult functioning."

In addition, the revised purpose attempted to redirect the focus of the states back to the basic education program and away from the secondary completion programs that were enjoying far more success.

Grants to public or private nonprofit agencies could only be made if proof was submitted of consultation with local educational agencies. The section dealing with the state plan was broadly amended. The plan now needed to do the following:

- Describe how delivery of services could be expanded beyond schools.
- Describe how different populations and constituencies had been included in the development of the plan. These were to include business, labor unions, libraries, higher education institutions, public health authorities, poverty programs, community organization, limited English, and institutionalized adults.
- Show how the state had sought to expand participation by providing flexible hours, locations, transportation, and child care.
- Provide special emphasis on basic education and assistance to those with limited English.
- Demonstrate that the needs of adult immigrants had been considered.
- Indicate the criteria for evaluation of proposals.

The 1978 amendments also authorized the establishment of a clearinghouse. The secretary was to award grants that would develop methods to address "problems of national significance," to evaluate special projects and training programs, and to disseminate information about adult basic education through a clearinghouse (National Advisory Council on Adult Education 1980.)

A 1980 study of the state of adult education programs by Young et al. analyzed the implementation of the AEA in terms of three types of programs: adult basic education (ABE), adult secondary education (ASE), and English as a second language (ESL). One of the major findings of the study was that the 1978 amendments had achieved their goal of opening up delivery systems. Thus only 38 percent of all participants studied in elementary and secondary schools. Sixty-two percent learned in other locations with 27.6 percent of the total participants attending adult learning centers. The study found that adult basic education participants "were most likely to attend programs in community-based centers such as community centers, churches, hospitals, or private homes" (Delker 1984, p. 10). Secondary programs were mostly held in secondary schools (Young et al. 1980).

The overall picture that emerged from the study was of an extremely diverse set of programs that included different locations, methods, techniques, and learning formats. Interestingly, individualized instruction was the dominant mode of instruction in both basic education and secondary education programs. Group instruction or a combination of group and individualized instruction was more common for English as a second language programs.

THE LITERACY THRUST: 1980-1991

As Beder (1991) has pointed out, the 1980s have seen a pointed rise in the national discussion concerning adult illiteracy. This has been due to heightened concern with national productivity and the link between literacy and economic development. The 1984 amendments to the Adult Education Act were indicative of Reagan administration preoccupations with these issues. These can be summarized as a renewed interest in literacy (but with reduced reliance on federal support), an emphasis on the use of the volunteer, and measures for cost cutting and the concomitant encouragement of private enterprise's entrance in areas formally reserved for the public or private nonprofit sector. The early years of the Reagan administration were the only times that the appropriations for adult education did not increase.

In terms of literacy initiatives, several efforts both public and private were launched. In 1981 the nongovernmental Coalition for Literacy was established. This group emphasized volunteer activities, publicity for literacy issues, response to public inquiries, and fund raising to support these activities. The Reagan administration also pushed for the use of volunteers as a way of decreasing costs while still dealing with what was coming to be seen as a crisis in literacy. It launched the Secretary of Education's Adult Literacy Initiative with much fanfare. This group focused on the use of volunteers to augment other literacy activities. The National Advisory Council on Adult Education (NACAE) found that there was widespread concern about the initiative among adult educators who feared that the secretary had overlooked existing ABE programs, that volunteers would not be properly trained and supervised, and that the influx of volunteers would affect management of programs in adverse ways (NACAE 1985). Both of these programs relied on the support of private groups and their efforts were devoted to fund raising (NACAE 1986).

In addition, the NACAE held a series of hearings on the AEA. The purpose was to ascertain grass-roots sentiment about the act and its provisions. They recommended a broadening of the council to include representatives from "business, industry, and other endeavors in which adults are gainfully employed" (NACAE 1985). Another recommendation was that the state's minimum share increase from 10 percent to 20 percent. The council also recommended eliminating all reference to bilingual education, substituting "English as a second language" or "English for speakers of other languages." Additionally, the council urged that the act provide for the standardized reporting of state data. These proposals were rejected. Accepted recommendations dealt with the elimination of special populations because this was considered to be redundant (NACAE 1985).

The 1984 amendments to the act expanded the basic purpose by including the new national priority on literacy. Thus, the AEA reads that adult education programs will "enable all adults to acquire basic literacy skills necessary to function in

society" (U.S. House of Representatives 1987, p. 308).

Among the important changes authorized at this time was the decision to allow grants to profit-making agencies when they could "make a significant contribution to attaining the objectives of this Act, and . . . provide substantially equivalent education at a lesser cost or . . . provide services and equipment not available in public institutions" (U.S. House of Representatives 1987, p. 310). This provision was in keeping with the Reagan administration's efforts to cut costs while encouraging competition with public institutions.

Discretionary funds were again made available to the Department of Education for research, development, demonstration projects, dissemination, and evaluation. Specifically named as possible activities were programs that improved adult education for the elderly, evaluated educational technology and computer software for adult educational uses, and supported exemplary programs that fostered cooperation among businesses, schools, and community groups (U.S. House of Representatives 1987).

Other changes included the repeal of the 1978 provisions for special populations except for references to Native Americans. The definition of adult was broadened to include those beyond the age of compulsory school attendance under state law, as well as those aged 16 and over. Because of anticipated state cutbacks, state directors of adult education had lobbied for the repeal of the section mandating that states maintain the previous year's level of funding, but this was retained with the provision that the secretary could waive it for 1 year.

Building on the decade's literacy emphasis, the 1988 revision of the act broadly restated the purpose to emphasize literacy:

> It is the purpose of this title to assist the States to improve educational opportunities for adults who lack the level of literacy skills requisite to effective citizenship and productive employment. (U.S. House of Representatives 1991, p. 505)

In Forrest Chisman's (1990) words, "Congress discovered adult literacy" (p. 223) in 1988. In addition to the Adult Education Act amendments, other legislation dealing with adult literacy included the Family Support Act and the adoption of final regulations to implement the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (ibid.).

According to Chisman, the reauthorization of the Adult Education Act in 1988 was the third important development in the new focus on adult illiteracy. As ultimately passed, the AEA authorized the appropriation of $200 million with each state receiving at least $250,000 and the rest of the monies to be distributed on the basis of the previously used ratio. This substantially increased the amount of federal funds available. In addition, the act introduced special grants that were to be made for workplace and English literacy programs. Also added were categorical grants to programs that work with commercial drivers to increase their knowledge to complete test requirements and to programs for migrant farmworkers and for immigrants.

In addition, the Secretary of Education became responsible for providing an information network. The secretary was also mandated to come up with a definition of literacy within 2 years and to conduct a study to estimate accurately the number of illiterate people in the United States (U.S. House of Representatives 1991).

Other aspects of the AEA focused on administrative issues, many of which had been debated within the adult education community for years. Significantly, the federal share of the costs was to be decreased gradually to 75 percent by fiscal year 1992 and after. Although this still did not represent the minimum state share anticipated in 1966, it did indicate an effort to decrease the federal share.

The act also placed a cap on local administrative spending at 5 percent, with 95 percent of the state grants to be used for instructional costs. This, however, could be open to negotiation if the amount would be "insufficient for adequate planning, administration, evaluation, and coordination of programs" (U.S. House of Representatives 1991, p. 510). The states were also mandated to cap their administrative costs at 5 percent or $50,000, whichever was greater.

Despite efforts to eliminate it, the provision for "maintenance of effort" was not fundamentally changed. The NACAE in particular worked to get this section repealed. After holding its own hearings, the NACAE reported that state directors felt that the section was a "legislative incentive to distort and deceive" (NACAE 1988, p. 51). As a major issue, the NACAE pointed out in Congressional testimony that the requirement led many states to underreport their actual spending, because of anticipated downturns. This has led to a situation where it is impossible to calculate actual spending and hence to make valid predictions about future spending.

Other changes included the following: the for-profit organizations allowed under the 1984 revisions were restricted to participation in consortia in 1988; a section that stipulated the kinds of educational programs authorized for institutionalized persons was added. This section described the different kinds of programs that could be funded such as basic education, special education, bilingual education, and secondary school programs.
Procedural changes were made in the filing of state plans. The AEA now required that the state plan describe how volunteers would be used and trained, although it was careful to indicate that these volunteers should "supplement" and not "supplant" salaried employees (U.S. House of Representatives 1991). There were also new requirements for planning and evaluation.

Research and special demonstration projects were again included and funded. Activities were to include the establishment of a national clearinghouse on literacy. Additional areas of concern were the special needs of adults with learning disabilities, those with limited English proficiency, and homeless persons.

Chisman (1990) sees this incarnation of the act as a change in purpose from previous legislation on adult education. Although it is certainly true that literacy, by 1988, had become a panacea for a variety of social ills, the human capital aspect of the act was present from the very beginning, and indeed the initial wording of even the 1962 version makes this plain. Although the emphasis has remained constant, it is true that the federal initiative for workplace literacy is broadly accepted. Certainly, the inclusion of workplace literacy in the 1988 legislation and the reception of the Jump Start report (Chisman 1989) indicate a renewed and strengthened interest in the subject.

The 1988 legislative debates also indicated the distance between the social concerns of the policy makers and the bureaucratic concerns of certain sectors of the adult education community. Thus, the NACAE indicated in testimony that it felt that no literacy legislation should be drafted

at the present and that instead a full audit of current programs should be conducted. It emphasized the importance of standardized reporting and of objective assessments of student performance. Provision for the National Advisory Council was not renewed (U.S. House of Representatives 1991).

The National Literacy Act (NLA) of 1991 (Public Law 102-73) continued the process of focusing on literacy as a means of solving a myriad of social problems. After 2 years of study, a definition was devised:

> For the purposes of this Act the term "literacy" means an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, and to compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, to achieve one's goals and develop one's knowledge and potential. (U.S. Department of Education 1991, p. 1)

The NLA is a broad effort to enhance cooperative efforts among the different branches of government, as well as state agencies, providers, and business and industry. An important part of the act is the amendment to the Adult Education Act that creates the National Institute for Literacy. The purpose of the institute is to act as "a central repository of information and expertise for federal programs, agencies and also for Congress, the states, program providers, business and industry" (ibid.). The five major areas of operation of the institute are (1) basic and applied research; (2) program assistance, technical assistance, and training; (3) policy analysis and evaluation; (4) dissemination of information about best practices of instruction; and (5) assistance to federal agencies in implementing the act and finding ways to achieving uniform reporting requirements, develop performance measures, and develop standards of program effectiveness (ibid., p. 2).

The NLA also authorizes the institute to award Literacy Leadership fellowships to individuals "pursuing careers in adult literacy instruction, management, research or innovation" (ibid., p. 2). In fiscal year 1992 $15 million was authorized, and this is to be continued for each year through 1995.

In an effort to facilitate dissemination, the act established State/Regional Literacy Resource Centers that would link the National Literacy Institute with program providers, aid in diffusion, assist in coordinating programs, provide technical assistance, encourage state-industry partnerships, and provide training to literacy instructors. This is a federal-state matching program, and the allotments are based on the same formula as those made under the basic state grants program of the Adult Education Act. In fiscal years 1992 and 1993, $25 million per year was authorized.

The second title of the act establishes a national Workforce Literacy Assistance Collaborative to be administered by the Department of Labor. The collaborative is to provide small and medium-sized businesses with technical assistance in developing and implementing literacy programs. In addition, the act calls for a grant program for National Workforce Literacy Strategies. These grants will "develop, test, and evaluate replicable large-scale national strategies based on local, regional, statewide and industry-wide partnerships between the public and private sectors" (ibid., p. 3). Significantly, the states are required to develop indicators of program quality within 2 years, and these are then to be used in program evaluation.

Title III of the act assists the states in the provision of services. The authorization of the basic state grants of the Adult Education Act was increased to $260 million in fiscal year 1992. States must modify their plans to indicate measurable goals for improving literacy levels, retention, and long-term learning gains and to "describe a comprehensive approach to achieving those goals" (ibid.).

CONCLUSIONS

The history of the Adult Education Act is both simple and quite complex. Starting from a program that was tacked onto the Economic Opportunity Act, the program has consistently grown and prospered. In 1965 the program served 38,000 students and was funded for less than $19 million (although only $4,444,703 was actually used that first year). By 1988 funding had risen to $134 million and the number of participants had reached 3 million (U.S. Department of Education 1990; USOE 1967). Yet the program still reaches only a small percentage of the target population. The percentage reached is estimated from 4 to 6 percent of the target population. This has been a persistent problem throughout the history of the act and it has continued as the target population was widened to include those lacking high school diplomas.

The persistent efforts to reach wider audiences have been written into the AEA in terms of mandating greater community participation, cooperation with business and industry, the funding of community programs, and the use of volunteers. Yet the goal remains elusive, perhaps for good reason. In the 1980s, the issue was recast as a crisis in literacy, bringing greater attention to the issue, but not much more in the way of funding until the 1988 revisions. The National Literacy Act of 1991 seems to be the culmination of the 1980s focus on adult illiteracy, but the very emphasis of the NLA on workplace literacy and economic productivity points up the central tensions within adult education legislation from its inception. It becomes imperative to place these changes within a greater perspective.

Looked at as a whole, several themes emerge from this discussion of the history of the Adult Education Act. They were present at the beginning of Congressional testimony in 1962 and they continue today. In the first place, there is a divergence of purpose among the states, the federal government, and professional adult educators (who are by no means united themselves). The primary supporters of the original legislation were NAPSAE officials (with broad grass-roots support) and the Office of Education staff. NAPSAE's aim was professionalization of adult education. Throughout the 1950s, one of NAPSAE's principal goals had been to install state directors of adult education. After state grants failed to institutionalize the office and an effort to work on the local level was abandoned, NAPSAE saw the federal government as the last resort for pushing the state governments to develop adult education branches. Although many local municipalities had adult education programs, the state for the most part did not coordinate efforts or provide funding or direction.

However, since control of education in the United States resides with the states and local communities, the case for federal funding needed to be made in terms of national goals and priorities. The central issues had already been laid out by Ambrose Caliver in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when building on Ginzberg and Bray's work, he called for federal intervention to prevent the waste of

human resources. In so doing, he adopted an instrumental approach to the attainment of literacy, that is, that it was essential for future training and ultimately for the national welfare. Although individual quality of life remained a concern, the argument needed to be framed in terms of the national interest. Yet this was only a beginning, because this argument by itself probably would not have been enough to overcome Congressional wariness over educational issues in general. This has developed into a discrepancy still present into the 1990s. Although the national purpose of the act is for employment and training, according to Young et al. (1980), the teachers and students are more concerned with personal development.

The War on Poverty provided the initial impetus for finally passing some kind of adult education program. But the price for the passage was that the program was separated from the Office of Education. Although USOE still administered the program, it was attached to the Office of Economic Opportunity, which had quite different goals and agenda. Thus, the irony was that a program initially designed to strengthen the state bureaucracy was housed in an agency that was devoted to circumventing state bureaucratic structures and developing new methods for bringing about community change. When the 1966 amendments moved the program to the Office of Education, the transfer was seen as the beginning of the move toward parity with other educational levels. Hence the celebration of 25 years of the Adult Education Act came in 1991 instead of 1989.

When originally proposed, the federal role was supposed to be to supply seed money that would spur the states into a recognition of the need to support adult education. NAPSAE, in particular, never questioned the state role in this matter, and the issue was merely one of getting the process started, when other avenues had failed. Thus, from the beginning, this aspect of the act had disappointing consequences. Until the 1988 amendments, the states were expected to maintain their previous levels of funding and to shoulder at least 10 percent of program costs. Over this period of time, state shares increased considerably with some states more than matching the federal allocation. The actual amounts are disputable since some states underreported their actual funding of the program in order to escape the maintenance of effort clause. However, it seems clear that state commitments to adult education have grown over the past 25 years. Yet, according to Paul Delker (1987), even though the committed funds have increased significantly, most states still did not have legislation guaranteeing adult education. Nevertheless, Delker was optimistic that such legislation could become pervasive by the end of the century.

Thus, at this point it is clear that even within NAPSAE's limited aims, the AEA has been only partially successful. Certainly, all states and territories now have state directors of adult education, develop state plans, and have in place (to varying extents) a state bureaucratic structure, yet adult education has not often been institutionalized on the state level. Unlike children's education, the federal government has assumed a major share of the funding in many states (no matter what the percentage actually is). More important, adult education has remained supported at the state level, with few localities taking on a major share of the cost. To be sure, this has meant that many of the arguments surrounding children's education have not touched adult education, but it has also continued the marginality long associated with adult education.

Not only did Congress envision this program as the foundation for building

stronger state support, but also as a temporary and low-cost measure. It was temporary, because the improvement of children's education would eventually do away with the program; and it was low cost, because it relied partly on the use of volunteers and paraprofessionals. Short training institutes would teach instructors how to work with adults. Yet, almost immediately, the training shifted to the development of graduate programs, something that was certainly more akin to the NAPSAE vision than to the legislation itself.

In addition, no one anticipated the extent of the problem. Initially viewed as a problem in the South and among minority groups, it was soon seen that problems of illiteracy were widespread and affected all areas in the United States. In fact, over the years, the principal story of the Adult Education Act, has been the struggle over a definition of literacy and the political ramifications of this debate.

A related argument dealing with the difference in perception of the program has been reflected in the continuing debate over the failure to attract the least educated. From the beginning, Congressional intent was to provide for those most lacking basic education skills. Although NAPSAE and other adult educators argued for broadening the target group to those lacking high school, this was originally rejected. When it was added in 1970, the amount of funding available to secondary education programs was capped. This argument was framed on several different levels. On the one hand, critics asserted that the programs took the easy way, taking in effect the cream of the uneducated. Those seeking the high school credential were considered to be the most highly motivated and more skilled; for the most part they were not illiterate. Additionally, the relatively low level of support for adult education programs led to an emphasis on those with more skills who needed less labor-intensive programs. Supporters of the inclusion of high school equivalency programs maintained that the high school credential was essential for future training, which after all was the true purpose of the act. In the 1970s, the argument shifted somewhat with the concern for functional literacy and the debate over Adult Performance Levels. This changed the emphasis from grade level to functioning, and, in effect, extended the pool of potential participants.

This debate over participants has continuously surfaced. From 1962, when the title of the proposed act was changed from Adult Literacy to Adult Basic Education to Adult Education, through 1988, when the National Advisory Council recommended that the title be changed to Adult Basic Education, legislators and policy makers have been grappling with the questions of target population and appropriate nomenclature. Indeed, the 1991 National Literacy Act brings us full circle.

Finally, Congress has been unable to deal effectively with the multiplicity of programs dealing with adult education. Although cooperation with other agencies was a consistent theme in the legislation, this effort has not been successful and the result has been little coordination among the various agencies. The latest effort is the National Literacy Act, which perhaps will have greater success.

There has been a constant discrepancy among the various policy makers. Although the adult education community, initially represented by NAPSAE, sought parity with other educational levels, the adult education program was seen as an end in itself. But in order to justify its existence as a federal program, adult basic education needs to be defined constantly in terms of means, that is, what it can

accomplish. Thus, the new literacy initiative is very much part of the original human capital views espoused by Ambrose Caliver and Ginzberg and Bray in the 1940s and 1950s.

In terms of adult education, the AEA has been successful. It has contributed to the growth of the field, both in terms of program development and the training of professionals. The programs, however, have not been institutionalized or adopted by the state and local governments to the degree anticipated. Because of federal funding, and the current idea of a crisis in literacy, policy decisions have been made on the basis of criteria developed by the federal government and business and industry, usually far removed from the perceived need of the individuals affected.

The actual provision of programming is effective, but limited. Although legislation has increasingly expanded the delivery of services and asked for community input, the population to be served has been considerably redefined in recent years, leaving large numbers unserved.

Finally, state-federal relations have at times been strained. The 1970s saw a vying for power, with the elimination of the federal discretionary funding the result. As Radwin (1984) pointed out, the very success of the development of the state adult education programs brought about the tensions and thus, ironically, can be seen as part of the success of the act.

A full analysis of the past 25 years of the Adult Education Act remains to be done. However, it is clear that the AEA has been successful in terms of developing programs and state structures. The embrace of a social welfare model for the program has hindered its appeal, yet it is this very approach that allowed the legislation to be passed in the first place. Given federal reluctance to fund education, it is probable that a broader bill would never have succeeded. The present literacy thrust has continued this model, without clear understanding of the implications of the adoption of this policy. Ever short of funds, adult educators have accepted the publicity associated with the crisis in literacy without questioning if this is best way to proceed. There is a limit to how far the federal government can go in institutionalizing programs. The relatively easy passage of adult education legislation has meant little public debate about the policy issues. Rather than celebrate 25 years of the program, it might be more appropriate to reflect on the issues raised by the legislation and ways of resolving them.

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